Amendments to the Claims:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

Claim 1 (previously presented): An isolated peptide comprising an epitope recognized by anti-filaggrin autoantibodies present in serum from rheumatoid arthritis patients, wherein said epitope comprises the motif Ser-Cit-His in which Cit represents a citrulline residue.

Claim 2 (canceled)

Claim 3 (previously presented): An artificial antigen recognized specifically by anti-filaggrin autoantibodies present in serum from rheumatoid arthritis patients, comprising or consisting of at least one peptide according Claim 1.

Claim 4 (canceled)

Claim 5 (previously presented): An isolated antigenic composition for diagnosing the presence of rheumatoid arthritis-specific autoantibodies in a biological sample, containing at least one peptide according to Claim 1.

Claim 6 (previously presented): A method for detecting rheumatoid arthritis-specific autoantibodies in a biological sample comprising:

contacting said biological sample with at least one peptide according to Claim 1 under conditions which allow the formation of a peptide/antibody complex with any rheumatoid arthritis-specific autoantibodies possibly present in the biological sample;

removing the unbound peptide from the peptide/antibody complex; and

detecting the presence of the complex, whereby the presence or absence of rheumatoid arthritis-specific autoantibodies in said biological sample is determined.

Claim 7 (previously presented): A kit for detecting rheumatoid arthritis-specific autoantibodies in a biological sample comprising at least one peptide according to Claim 1, and buffers and reagents for constituting a reaction medium which allows the formation of a peptide/antibody complex, and/or means for detecting said peptide/antibody complex.

Claim 8 (canceled)

Claim 9 (previously presented): The antigenic composition of Claim 5 wherein the at least one peptide is labeled.

Claim 10 (previously presented): The antigenic composition of Claim 5 wherein the at least one peptide is conjugated to a carrier molecule.

Claim 11 (currently amended): The kit of Claim 7 further comprising means for detecting the ~~antigen/antibody~~ peptide/antibody complex.

Claim 12 (previously presented): A kit for detecting rheumatoid arthritis-specific autoantibodies in a biological sample, comprising at least one peptide according to Claim 1, and means for detecting the peptide/antibody complex.

Claim 13 (previously presented): An isolated peptide of claim 1, comprising the motif $X1$-Ser-Cit-His-$X2$ (SEQ ID NO: 7), wherein
$X1$ is Ser or Gly, and
$X2$ is Ser or Pro.

Claim 14 (previously presented): A isolated peptide of claim 13, comprising the motif $X0$-$X1$-Ser-Cit-His-$X2$ (SEQ ID NO: 8), wherein $X0$ is Asp.

Claim 15 (previously presented): A isolated peptide of claim 14, comprising the motif $X0$-$X1$-Ser-Cit-His-$X2$-$X3$ (SEQ ID NO: 9), wherein $X3$ is Gly or Arg.

Claim 16 (new): An isolated peptide comprising an epitope recognized by anti-filaggrin autoantibodies present in serum from rheumatoid arthritis patients, wherein said epitope consists of the motif X0-X1-Ser-Cit-His-X2-X3 (SEQ ID NO: 10) in which Cit represents a citrulline residue and X0, X1, X2, and X3 can be any residue.

Claim 17 (new): The isolated peptide of claim 16, wherein said epitope consists of the motif X0-X1-Ser-Cit-His-X2-X3 (SEQ ID NO: 11), and wherein

X0 is any residue;

X1 is Ser or Gly;

X2 is Ser or Pro; any

X3 is any residue.

Claim 18 (new): The isolated peptide of claim 17, wherein said epitope consists of the motif X0-X1-Ser-Cit-His-X2-X3 (SEQ ID NO: 12), and wherein

X0 is Asp;

X1 is Ser or Gly;

X2 is Ser or Pro; and

X3 is any residue.

Claim 19 (new): The isolated peptide of claim 18, wherein said epitope consists of the motif X0-X1-Ser-Cit-His-X2-X3 (SEQ ID NO: 13), and wherein

X0 is Asp;

X1 is Ser or Gly;

X2 is Ser or Pro; and

X3 is Gly or Arg.